

**Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works**

**Hearing Entitled, “*Hearing on the Nominations of Amanda Howe to be Assistant Administrator for Mission Support of the Environmental Protection Agency, David Uhlmann to be Assistant Administrator for Enforcement and Compliance Assurance of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Carlton Waterhouse to be Assistant Administrator of Land and Emergency Management of the Environmental Protection Agency.*”**

**September 15, 2021**

**Questions for the Record for Amanda Howe**

**Ranking Member Capito:**

1. Can you describe your prior experience working with federal agencies?

**RESPONSE:** Throughout my 20 years of public service, I have spent every year working on behalf of the American people, in several capacities across local and state government, in a collaborative manner with our federal agency partners. As Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Trade for the Commonwealth of Virginia, I worked closely with the 16 agencies of the Secretariat to advance a bipartisan agenda that delivered for all Virginians. My career path later led me to serve Governor Tim Kaine as Executive Director of Virginia’s Royal Welcome in 2007, and as Deputy Chief of Staff and Acting Chief of Staff to the Mayor of New York City. If confirmed, I expect my senior management experience in state and local government, where I worked in partnership with federal agencies, to guide my approach—focused on transparency, collaboration, logistics, and operational know-how.

2. Your past experience includes working for politicians such as Kamala Harris, Bill de Blasio, and Maya Wiley. Do you support the environmental policies that were endorsed by these progressive candidates?

**RESPONSE:** I support President Biden’s whole-of-government approach to addressing climate change and other environmental issues, and if confirmed I look forward to supporting the Administration’s environmental goals through my work in the Office of Mission Support, as appropriate.

3. Can you explain how your experience in partisan politics and campaigns will inform your actions as Assistant Administrator in working across the aisle with both parties in Congress?

**RESPONSE:** All of my work experience shares a common thread—a focus on transparency, collaboration, logistics, and operational know-how. I learned early on in my career, during my time working for the Commonwealth of Virginia, with a divided state government, the importance of working collaboratively with both

**Republicans and Democrats to make progress and deliver bipartisan solutions. If confirmed, I intend to bring this collaborative approach to my work in the Office of Mission Support at EPA.**

4. The EPA Office of Mission Support provides the Agency with critical support on efforts to improve efficiency, coordination, and services for the public, including the EPA's grants management. During this Administration, my office has frequently received neither advance notice of major grant announcements nor of financial and program-focused initiatives that EPA is rolling out. If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that as Ranking Member of this Committee, my staff and I receive advanced notice of grant announcements?

**RESPONSE: Managing the use of taxpayer dollars is a serious responsibility. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the grants management plan is managed responsibly; and that the grants are strategic, effective and accountable. This can be achieved by working collaboratively and transparently. I register your concern. I look forward to learning more about this issue from the team at EPA's Office of Mission Support.**

5. I have previously written to EPA on April 27, 2021 and July 29, 2021 requesting a full accounting of how the Agency has expended and plans to expend the \$100 million appropriated under section 6002 of H.R. 1319, the "American Rescue Plan" (ARP, Public Law 117-2). EPA provided an initial, incomplete response to me on June 24, 2021, and then, fewer than 24 hours after the response letter, EPA publicly announced additional details regarding the \$50 million for environmental justice initiatives, including 14 projects receiving approximately \$2.8 million in funding under section 6002—all projects that were unaccounted for in the June 24th response. Additionally, on July 7, 2021, EPA announced the availability of the remaining \$50 million in ARP funding for projects focused on air quality monitoring PA's lack of communication and full transparency about imminent plans to publicly announce the awards was disappointing. If confirmed, do you commit to reviewing all the materials and information that has been provided to the Committee and provide supplemental responses with any additional details that I have requested, but the EPA has failed to provide to date?

**RESPONSE: I understand the importance of Congress' need to obtain information necessary to perform its legitimate oversight functions and, if confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this issue from the team in EPA's Office of Mission Support and working with EPA staff to accommodate Congress' interests.**

6. If confirmed, do you commit to providing my staff advance notice of any ARP funding that is being distributed or funding opportunities under the ARP that are being announced?

**RESPONSE: I understand the importance of Congress' need to obtain information necessary to perform its legitimate oversight functions and, if confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this issue from the team in EPA's Office of Mission Support and working with EPA staff to accommodate Congress' interests.**

7. In distributing \$50 million of its ARP funding, EPA has chosen to distribute a majority of the funds to date as "environmental justice grants" through the Office of Environmental Justice. The EPA's use of "environmental justice grants" through the Office of Environmental Justice differs from the Agency's authority to issue grants or conduct activities under the Clean Air Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act, and Energy Policy Act of 2005, which were specific authorities Congress directed EPA to use in distributing funds in the ARP. The ARP did not direct EPA to issue "environmental justice" grants. Do you believe EPA must adhere to the plain language of Congressional authorizations and appropriations in distributing grants? If not, why not?

**RESPONSE: I understand the importance of Congress' need to obtain information necessary to perform its legitimate oversight functions and, if confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this issue from the team in EPA's Office of Mission Support and working with EPA staff to accommodate Congress' interests.**